

Michael Arnold:

All right. Welcome to episode three, Monday state of mind. My name is Michael Arnold. I am the director of alumni and recovery support services for the harmony foundation. On this episode, we are going to continue talking about the stories we tell ourselves. So if you're driving, you're just waking up. Maybe you're headed to the gym or out on that morning walk, or just getting your day going. You're going to want to make sure to have a pen and a piece of paper, or you're just going to have to put this episode on repeat because the guests that I have today, she's going to drop some serious knowledge bombs on the stories we tell ourselves. So do you guys want to know who this guest is? Her name is LauraBeth Burkhalter. LB. Do you want to tell everybody a little bit of, just give everybody a little bit of backstory about who you are, what you do?

LB:

Good morning guys. I'm LB. I am a person in recovery and I grew up in a little town called Natchez Mississippi. I'm currently the Director of. Community Engagement for Jade Recovery in Lakewood, Colorado. And I'm super stoked that Michael asked me to be on this podcast today because if there's one thing I know about it's stories and what I used to tell myself,

Michael Arnold:

Right. You know, that's, I was really excited to be able to start this podcast series out. LB, with, with the stories we tell ourselves, because it's, you know, the stories we tell ourselves really dictate, you know, our lives. And so I just want to, we're just going to just get into it. You guys, LB, and I we're just, we don't sugar coat, we just, we just dive. So LB, you know, if we could just, I just want to start out by you, you know, being able to talk about, you know, that hidden mechanism is what I like to call these things. And so when was it LB that you realized, okay, you actually had control over the stories you told yourself and when was it that you were like, Oh my gosh, what I tell myself really does dictate my day to day actions.

LB:

I can honestly think about my entire life leading up until when I was 29 years old and having that aha moment because it wasn't just, it wasn't just, you know, how, what I told myself and the stories that I told myself, it was where I grew up and the stories that everybody else told each, each other as well. And that really dictated my life, how I lived and how I presented myself.

LB:

And I really found my power in choice when when I noticed that sharing my honest experience like the, the truth in my experience and it's, it's saved other's lives and it saved mine as well. I realized that I was drowning in stories and, and that others were living that way too. And it was once I realized that that being honest and vulnerable and open about my stories I tapped into this power that helped shape me into the person that I am today.

Michael Arnold:

Dude, I love that. I love that you said, you know, being able to really recognize what we're saying to ourselves, because, you know, for those of you listening, if you had didn't, if you didn't listen to episode number two, the, the intro to the stories we tell ourselves, I talk about how the most simple stories like, you know, this day is going to suck or you know, I can't stay sober or, Oh my gosh, my friends don't like me, how those little things can totally make us spin. Right? LB those little things can make us spin.

LB:

Yep. For sure. The, the smallest of things. And like, if, if I don't set my intentions for the day every morning of, you know, something as simple as today, I choose not to cause harm to myself and not to cause harm to others and an intention that simple will get me through some of the most difficult moments.

Michael Arnold:

That's awesome. So then I just want to ask you, you know, since you started noticing this, right, like being able to actually set intentions to be aware of your thoughts so that you can actually choose how your day is going to go. I would like it if you could even just talk to our listeners, because I know you have some, some practical tools, what are some, what are some, some tangible tools or some things that you would suggest to our listeners, for them to be able to, when they start to spin or they get into that negative mindset, what would you suggest to them that they do, that you have found for yourself to be super helpful for you to be able to get back on track?

LB:

So I just touched on one tool that I use, and that is every morning over a cup of coffee, I sit outside rain or shine, you know, snow or heat. And I set my intentions for the day, every single morning without fail. And it's, it doesn't have to be complicated. It doesn't, you don't have to do it, right.. Like there's no perfection in setting intentions. It can be something as simple as I choose not to cause harm to myself today. And I choose not to cause harm to others. And that, while it sounds simple, helps to reframe my mind into thinking, by, by not causing harm to myself throughout the day. If I'm, if I'm starting to, to like spiral out about the fact that I'm not good enough, or I don't, you know, I'm not pretty enough. Or I'm like all these things that my brain can tell me or, you know, I'm not strong enough or smart enough, I can stop because that's causing harm to myself and my actions through those thoughts will cause harm to other people because if I'm really scared or, and I'm living out of a place of fear, I'm, I'm causing harm to other people and myself.

LB:

So I can boil it down and keep it really simple because I can overthink everything. Now, these things take practice, you know, like you're not going to wake up tomorrow morning and be like, I'm setting my intentions and I'm doing this every day for the rest of my life. I mean, it takes a little practice. We're not perfect. And if you, and if you also struggle with perfectionism, that can be a thing too, you know? Like you want to get it perfect, but there's no perfect. You know, it's, it's just, it's just simply setting an intention. And what that looks like for you is what that looks like for you. The second thing that I do like throughout the day is to pause when I get stuck. So if I'm stressed, if I'm starting to spiral out, or even if I get too excited about something, cause that's a problem for me, maybe not for most people, but Michael, I know it is for you too.

LB:

I can get over excited about something. And I will start just like losing my mind in excitement. And it's like, even, even in those moments, like I don't want to start telling myself a story. That's not real with that either. I don't want to hype myself up about something that's not true. So I, I have to pause when aggravated, when overexcited, when, when sad, if I can just pause for a few seconds and think, well, like where's this coming from? Why am I so excited? Is this coming from a place of fear? Is this coming from a place of impulse? So intentions, pausing, and then reviewing, like my third thing would be to review

my day, every night before I go to bed. And again, it's not lengthy. It's not perfect. It's just very simply like, did I cause harm to myself today?

LB:

And where did I do that? Did I cause harm to other people today? What did that look like? Is there a place where I could have done better for myself and for other people? Like, it's really, it's almost like a casual dialogue with myself at night. As soon as my head hits the pillow, you know? And then through like through those three things that I do every day, I'm able to really keep my stories in check.

Michael Arnold:

Wow, if you guys are driving, you better put this on repeat or you better have written it down. Because again, what LB saying kind of like what I said before, you know, it really is about, you know, making the choice, right? I'll be, it's about making the choice to actually understand what we're thinking and why we're thinking it. Because if we are thinking about something that's not serving us or doing us good, it is going to affect not only us, like you said, LB, that was awesome. It doesn't just affect us. It affects other people. And I love that you said it's all about reviewing our day because sometimes, you know, we get busy. We don't always have the chance to really look at it until the end of the day. And then we do again, you know recovery has given that, that gift of choice to be able to go back and choose to do better. Right? Absolutely. It's uncomfortable sometimes to sit there and, and call ourselves out on things that we know we shouldn't be thinking about, but sometimes we don't know how to get out of that hole. And so it's really fun to be able to sit here and to provide these tools, you know, to have LB say, Hey, this is what you can do, because this is what helps me,

LB:

You know, what, what else is, what else is like amazing about living a life in recovery from anything, is that the more you surround yourself with people like you, Michael, who's also a person in recovery or the people that I choose every day to surround myself with that I call my friends or my tribe is that those people also understand the importance of calling each other out because it saves your life, you know? And like that is such a beautiful thing to have that, you know, friendships that I had growing up in a different, in a whole other life, you know, that was something that we never did for each other as we would, we would, co-sign each other's stories and you know, like whatever looked good for them looked good for me. And today as a person in recovery, my friends and I, who I consider my family, you know, really help hold me accountable. And that's another really, that's another important tool to have as well is surround yourself with people who think like you and act like you and align with your moral values.

Michael Arnold:

That's amazing. Yeah. I'm like, that's another bomb. Thank you for that, LB...that's so it's so important. And for you to sit here, LBv, I want to ask you, you know, like how does it, you know, being able to look back, what have you been able to recognize about the stories you would tell yourself, you know, before recovery and what your life looked like, and then now fast forward being in recovery and having that knowledge and awareness that you have a choice to change of what your life looks like now? Like how different is it,

LB:

How different is it, you know honestly for the first 29 years of my life, I think I was, I was terrified of letting go of all the stories that I told myself on a daily basis. I consistently was the victim of all of my

stories. And I thought that if I, that if I let go of my anger and my anxiety and my sadness and insecurity and all these things, Mmm. I personally, I'm a musician, you know, and I write and I perform, and I thought that if I let go of that, I would lose my creativity. And I thought that hanging on to addiction and alcoholism was, was like fueling my creativity. And I had all these excuses as to, you know, to hang on to this story and to hang onto that story because it made me unique and made me who I was. And I was, you know, I was terrified of letting go of that, but I was also terrified to live. None of that was like, I was purely existing in misery. Like none of that was living life, which is what I get to do today, you know, like finally being able to own, own my truth and you know, and like, let go of being the victim. You know, I, I finally get to live a really beautiful life today. And while I, you know, I honor like my pain and sadness and all of those things that were truths in my, in my past life, not in recovery. I honor those things through music and through lyrics and through poetry. And I don't, I don't shun them and I'm not ashamed or embarrassed anymore. I own them, honor them, and move on. And being able to let go on a daily basis of those stories that used to keep me so trapped is what's so huge for me. Because I live a life that's so free today that, you know, I don't even obsess about material things or like everything is spiritual for me today because I get to live a truth and I get to not cause harm to myself or others. And for me, that's, that's what it's all about. And that is what keeps me sober. You know what I mean? Life is, life is so beautiful today. And I know that that probably sounds cliché. You know, that's probably a cliché thing to say, like, life is beautiful today, but it really is. And I didn't understand what life looked like until, until my vision really cleared. And I was able to see the person that I really am.

Michael Arnold:

That was just huge. And I think, you know what, I, you know, what I hear you saying is, you know, our stories can, can keep us prisoners or our stories that we tell ourselves, you can give us freedom. Oh, I love it. I just, you guys is why you listen to this podcast because you get to listen to people like LB and we talk about growth. You know, it's not easy to talk about transparency. We talk about getting vulnerable. We talk about, you know, making the choice to choose, to change our state of mind. Because like LB said, when she chose to change her, her state of mind, you went from being you know, a victim to being, uh, vor from being a prisoner to being free. I'm just like sitting. And I'm like, I'm like oozing happiness. Cause it's just like, this is what, this is what life is all about. Like, this is what it's all about. And so, you know, there's something that LB did bring up to me that we were talking about before she even got on podcast. And we, and she mentioned it a little bit ago about, you know, we are all in recovery from something, and quite frankly, we can be in recovery from the stories we tell ourselves so that we can live a better life. I would love to hear, you know, some more of your thoughts. Yeah. I really love that. You said that

LB:

Honestly being I don't know, I'm a firm believer that all humans are in recovery from something, whether it be self esteem issues, love addiction trauma, disordered eating, like whatever it, whatever it looks like for you is okay. And if you say you're in recovery from something you are and it's, it doesn't matter what you're in recovery from. As long as you are honoring your truth, I could probably even bring this around to like social media filters. Hmm. You know, choosing to live like unfiltered and honest and true leads to transformation. And that's, that's no longer a story we're telling ourselves that's our truth. That's our life. And that's what life and recovery from anything is all about.

Michael Arnold:

Change. Your story changed your life.

LB:

Boom.

Michael Arnold:

Awesome. LB. I just, I can't thank you enough for choosing to show up for everybody that listens to this podcast, to be able to give them, you know, another perspective and another way for people to choose, to see how they can change their stories. LB, is there any last one last gold nugget that you want to say before we close out?

LB:

No. You really drove it home there. I mean there's so we could probably go on and on for hours talking about this stuff, honestly,

Michael Arnold:

Hour hours,

LB:

There's the next time you gotta tune in for next episodes.

Michael Arnold:

All right. Before we end, before we end this, I do want to make sure lb, will you please tell our audience, you know, how they can follow you talk a little bit about how they can get to know Jade Recovery so that once they leave here, they can take a piece of you with them. Yeah.

LB:

Yeah, absolutely. Guys, please like check me out on social media. I'm on Instagram and Facebook. I have, and run Recovered Humans, which is a recovery support page for all human beings and recovery from anything. You can also find me personally on Instagram at LauraBeth Burkehalter, and then you can check out JadeRecovery.com.

Michael Arnold:

Awesome. All right. I want to go ahead and thank LB again for dropping some amazing knowledge bombs on the stories we tell ourselves. And I want to end this episode by reminding you, if you or someone you know, is struggling with addiction. Please call the Harmony Foundation at (866) 686-7867. Recovery is a journey and Harmony gives you the map. I'll see you next week.